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ORAL QUESTION (O-121/82)

with debate pursuant to Rule 42 of the Rules of Procedure

by Mr CECOVINI

on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Group

to the Commission of the European Communities

Subject: Environmental protection of the limestone region
of Trieste and establishment of an international
ecological limestone area

Whereas

- the International Treaty between Italy and Yugoslavia, signed in Osimo on 10 November 1975, aims to establish in an area of the Carso, partly in Italian territory and partly in Yugoslav territory, an international industrial free zone where more than a hundred industrial plants and a new population of perhaps more than 100,000 persons are to be located;
- it has clearly been shown to be inadvisable to create new industrial and urban settlements upstream from the city of Trieste on account of the high risk of serious environmental damage and for objective reasons of a technical and economic nature;

./. .

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- on the contrary, the Carso, on account of its extraordinary and unique geological and physiographical (geomorphological) structure, represents a natural asset of supreme interest and international scientific importance. This is the origin of the term 'karst' accepted in scientific language world-wide as meaning those particular phenomena (gullies, dolines, caves, sink holes, rivers and underground lakes, etc.) that characterize the Carso in the region of Trieste. Scholars flock here from all over the world as if to a natural park. Also of great importance are the 'castellars', monuments of prehistoric architecture scattered over the Carso and the particular architecture of the limestone houses, a rare example of constructions entirely of local stone;

having shown

- that the Carso constitutes a natural and world-wide cultural heritage that should be protected;

whereas

- by virtue of Law No. 184 of 6 April 1977 Italy ratified the Convention on the protection of the cultural and national heritage signed in Paris on 23 November 1972 establishing a list of the world-wide natural heritage (Article 2) and a list of endangered assets referring to assets threatened by public or private projects for major works and by rapid urban development;
- the zone in question is adjacent to the 'limestone reservations' established by Italy by virtue of Law No. 442 of 1 June 1971 and subsequently incorporated in the autonomous region Friuli-Venezia-Giulia among the environmental protection areas, the safeguarding of which would be incompatible with further large-scale industrial and human settlements on the limestone region in Trieste;

can the Commission state whether it intends

(1) to recommend to the Italian Government to:

- enter Carso in the region of Trieste, pursuant to Articles 1 and 2 of the Paris Convention referred to, in the list of assets constituting the natural and world-wide cultural heritage on account of its extraordinary geological and physiological (geomorphological) structure and its caves, prehistoric castellars and the particular architecture of the limestone houses;

- request that Carso in the region of Trieste be entered, pursuant to Article 11 of the said Convention, in the list of endangered assets insofar as they are threatened by public or private projects for major works and by rapid urban development;
 - promote, with the agreement of the Yugoslav Government, useful international scientific cooperation covering the whole area referred to in the economic annex to the Treaty of Osimo in the international ecological limestone region with a view to providing a research and study base for scholars of all nationalities on the model of the International Centre for Theoretical Physics of the International Atomic Energy Agency and UNESCO operating in Miramare (Trieste);
 - ensure that this ecological region serves as a centre for international studies on limestone geology, ecology, ethology, climatology, botany, zoology, palaeontology, archaeology, ethnography and environmental investigation and for all disciplines that can promote awareness and protection of the natural and cultural heritage of all the limestone regions in the world?
- (2) to urge UNESCO to coordinate, within the sphere of its responsibility, the measures referred to in point (1)?